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CUBA

The Soviet merchant vessel Nikolay Burdenko arrived in the Cuban port of Mariel on 10 April.

the ship took on a military cargo in Nikolaev in mid-March.

an undisclosed number of tanks were included.

Bloc arms deliveries to Cuba since the major shipments began last September now total well over 35,000 tons, plus large numbers of military vehicles. No additional shipments are known to be en route at this time.

Cuba and Hungary signed a five-year trade agreement on 5 April, and on the following day the Cuban cultural delegation now touring bloc countries signed a cultural agreement for 1961 with Poland. The latter pact provides for an exchange of teachers, artists, and exhibitions, and for radio and television cooperation.

There are new press rumors of a Khrushchev-Castro meeting before the end of the year, possibly in Cuba. Khrushchev accepted an invitation to visit Cuba which was proffered last June and renewed at the UN last September. Soviet sources said in October that Khrushchev was planning to visit Cuba sometime during 1961, probably following a Castro visit to Moscow. The present report is attributed by Mexican press sources to the

Soviet ambassador in Cuba, who recently returned to Havana following a trip to Mexico.

The press reported on 6 April that many Communist technicians were leaving Cuba because of disgust with the inefficiency of the Castro government. Groups of Czech aviation instructors and bank advisers were also reported to have returned home recently. Passenger manifests of the new Havana-Prague route to Cubana Airlines, however, do not show any noteworthy change in either eastward or westward movement of bloc personnel through 28 March.

Anti-Castro Activity

The pace of anti-Castro activity both inside Cuba and among Cuban exiles is mounting, and sabotage efforts against Cuban industrial and commercial installations are being stepped up.

new outbreaks of guerrilla activity in Oriente and Pinar del Rio provinces and in the border area of Las Villas and Matanzas provinces.

considerable information, some of it from Castro informants among the insurgents, on anti-Castro plans in the various provinces, and the Cuban intelligence service is receiving additional information on opposition operations and contacts from intercepted messages between anti-Castro elements in Florida and Cuba.

Skirmishes between government forces and insurgents in eastern Oriente Province are continuing to occur, although Raul Castro asserted on 6 April that government army and militia troops had liquidated the centers of resistance there. According to information reaching the US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, the government's saturation of the area with militia forces is forcing some of the ill-equipped anti-Castro guerrilla bands in the area to disband.

all government forces in the province were restricted to their posts, indicating that the government continues to expect trouble.

After seven months, guerrillas are still active in the Sierra Escambray region of Las Villas Province, although government counteraction and shortages of supplies have considerably reduced their numbers and mobility to the point where resistance may not be continued much longer. Evelio Duque, leader of one of the major resistance groups in the area, sought asylum in the Colombian Embassy in Havana on 6 April, according to [REDACTED]

Bogota rejected Duque's request that the Cuban Government not be informed of his action for ten to fifteen days so that the lives of the "1,200 insurgents" remaining in the Escambray might be protected.

Economic Difficulties

The increasing frequency with which Castro and other government leaders attempt in their speeches to minimize present material shortages underlines the regime's mounting concern with economic difficulties. On 6 April President Dorticos referred to the responsibility of "aggressive imperialism" for "minor shortages" in Cuba, and Castro conceded on 8 April that "some things, it is true, are lacking, but only luxury items used by the minority." Later in the same speech Castro said

his regime was "ready to ration articles so the people will not have to suffer."

A recent reliable report stated that the Cuban Bank of Foreign Commerce instructed all of its commercial attachés abroad to attempt to purchase a number of critical parts for electrical, industrial, and communications facilities. The majority of the parts being sought were formerly supplied by American companies, the report said. An untested Cuban source also reported on 5 April that the Castro government plans to announce before the end of April that it will recall all outstanding peso notes and replace them at the rate of one new peso for two old. The new pesos reportedly will be inscribed "People's Republic of Cuba."

At the UN

Cuba has enlisted the support of the Afro-Asian bloc in its efforts to have the UN call for bilateral discussions between Havana and Washington. Indonesia has been circulating a draft resolution along these lines which reportedly has the support of some Latin Americans.

To forestall the Afro-Asian initiative, the 12 Latin American countries which have diplomatic relations with Cuba have agreed that they must submit a resolution. The Venezuelan UN delegate considers that the debate on the Cuban complaint will be "so explosive that he could not imagine it being conducted without a resolution."

The 12 countries have drafted a resolution which in effect equates the US with Cuba, thereby dignifying Cuban charges. It also fails to define the problem specifically as a hemisphere matter that should be handled by the Organization of American States. The Latin Americans, however, have indicated a willingness to amend it. Their initiative makes it virtually certain that the General Assembly will issue a resolution in some form. [REDACTED]